

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

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DRAFTED BY C:HSonnenfeldt

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN FLASH

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: GW, US

SUBJECT: SPIEGEL PIECE ON SECRETARY'S ALLEGED VIEWS OF SPD

FOR AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND FROM SONNENFELDT

1. YOU SHOULD DO WHATEVER YOU APPROPRIATELY CAN TO
REPUDIATE THE MISCHIEVOUS ARTICLE IN THE JANUARY 5 ISSUE
OF "SPIEGEL" (PAGES 19-20). AS YOU RECALL, THE SECRETARY'S
ALLEGED REMARKS ABOUT THE VULNERABILITY OF TH: SPD TO
COMMUNIST PRESSURE CAME UP SOME WEEKS AGO FOLLOWING A
PERIODIC BACKGROUND LUNCHEON WHICH THE SECRETARY HAD WITH
EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENTS HERE. AT THAT TIME, A WHOLLY
DISTORTED VERSION WAS EVIDENTLY GOTTEN TO BRANDT VIA ONE
OF THE LUNCHEON PARTICIPANTS AND CAUSED VARIOUS SNIDE PRESS
COMMENTS IN BONN. WE ASSURED BRANDT THROUGH GENSCHER THAT
THE SECRETARY HAD MADE NO COMMENTS WHATSOEVER ABOUT THE
CURRENT SITUATION IN THE SPD BUT HAD SIMPLY WARNED ABOUT
THE POTENTIAL EFFECT ON THE FRG IF, OVER THE YEARS,
INCREASING NUMBERS OF WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS INCLUDE
COMMUNIST PARTIES.

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2. IT IS OBVIOUSLY ABSURD TO CLAIM THAT THE SECRETARY MAKES NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN COMMUNISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS.

3. THE NOTION THAT SECRETARY WAS JEALOUS OF BRANDT BECAUSE OF THE LATTER'S PRE-EMINENT POSITION AS A "DETENTE POLITICIAN" AND HIS RECEIPT OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE BEFORE THE SECRETARY LIKE THE REMAINDER OF THE ALLEGED REASONS FOR THE SECRETARY'S AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S "ANNOYANCE" WITH THE SPD ARE TOTAL PHONIES. IN FACT, AS YOU KNOW AS WELL AS ANYONE, OUR RELATIONS WITH AN FRG GOVERNMENT HAVE NEVER BEEN BETTER.

4. I REALIZE "SPIEGEL" NEEDS LITTLE OUTSIDE ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THIS KIND OF STORY, BUT THE ACTUAL BRANDT QUOTES SUGGEST THAT SOMEONE AT SPD HEADQUARTERS HAD A HAND IN IT. YOU MIGHT FIND A SUITABLE WAY TO POINT OUT TO BRANDT THAT THESE KINDS OF DISTORTION ARE PRETTY TAWDRY STUFF. KISSINGER

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